



## Introduction

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This is a selected list of restaurants in the Berkeley area written by Lucille Poskanzer, produced by Art Poskanzer, with help from their sons Harold for the cover design and Jef for the maps in the web version. We began this in 1978 and it has been on the Web at <http://RNC.LBL.gov/Restaurants/> since 1995. The authors alone are responsible for the information provided and the opinions expressed.

5/23/2007

## New

1

Since the last revision the following restaurants are **new**: Flavors of India and Namaste. The following are **newly included**: 900 Grayson. The following have **closed**: Beauregard's, Locanda Olmo, and Vanni. Turnover is frequent, so it is always wise to check ahead. Many close early or Sunday and are closed on Monday.

2

## South Side

### Raleigh's

4

2438 Telegraph Ave. south of Channing 848-8652

A popular hangout for the University crowd, this place offers mostly decent food in good size portions and many choices of beer. Inside can get very noisy when crowded, but what's special about this place is the lovely tree shaded outside patio that is an oasis of calm. Try it when you want some simple food, a cold beer, and a retreat from the craziness of Telegraph Avenue.

### Adagia

3

2700 Bancroft Way at College 647-2300

This upscale yet warm and friendly place is located across the street from campus, and offers good California eclectic food at both lunch and dinner. The fritto misto is especially good. The dining room has high ceilings, dark wood paneling, and well spaced tables, and outside is a lovely patio. Serving persons are young and enthusiastic, but not always efficient. Lunch prices are reasonable for the quality of the food, and wines are well priced. Recommended!

### Unicorn

5

2533 Telegraph Ave. at Blake 841-8098

Not far from campus, but difficult to see because of a poorly lit sign, this small jewel of a bistro features Asian Fusion food, influenced by Viet Nam, Malaysia, and the Chao Zhou region of southern China, with many vegetarian choices. Nicely decorated, with an intimate upscale atmosphere and friendly service, the prices are moderate. The "two person minimum" combinations are a really good deal! Worth a try, for sure.

### Namaste

6

2566 B Telegraph Ave. south of Blake 649-7600

In an extremely simple new storefront space close to south campus you will find generous portions of Nepalese Indian food. The prices are low, the beer is cold, and the service pleasant and unobtrusive. It's a quiet place too, and worth a visit for a relaxing meal of unusual tastes.

### Bateau Ivre

7

2629 Telegraph Ave. at Carleton 849-1100

An old favorite of many. Located in a charming house, this has an informal lunch and dinner cafe in the front section, with very well priced selections of good simple food, and more expensive and fancier dinners in the back section. Coffee and pastries are available all day. Tables are nicely spaced, and there's classical music playing softly for a romantic treat. I prefer the informal cafe for a simple and tasty meal. There's a patio for warm weather too.

### Kirala

8

2100 Ward St. on Shattuck 549-3486

This is a very popular Japanese restaurant, with a sake bar and robata grill. The decor is modern, the service quick, and the food excellent and expensive. It offers a very large selection of wonderful sushi, small plates of grilled food, as well as more traditional choices. There's a lively crowd, and the noise level gets high when this place is crowded, which is most of the time.

### Zax Tavern

9

2826 Telegraph Ave. at Oregon 848-9299

This Cal-Med bistro is a welcome addition to an area lacking good restaurants. The appetizers are uniformly terrific, main dishes hearty and delicious too, reflecting freshness and seasonality. The food prices are high as is the wine. The atmosphere is young, lively, and noisy, and there's a large full bar. Service is attentive and knowledgeable. Think of this when entertaining visiting family and friends. Popular, so reserve ahead.

**Shen Hua**

10

2914 College Ave. north of Ashby

883-1777

This is a large modern Chinese restaurant in the Elmwood area. It is usually crowded and very noisy, but it offers a varied menu with many unusual dishes, and the cooking level is high. The daily specials are worth a try. The prices are definitely upscale, but the portions are generous. The atmosphere is usually welcoming and service is swift, but everything can falter when the place is mobbed. Open for lunch also, when it is quieter.

**La Mediterranee**

11

2936 College Ave. north of Ashby

540-7773

Middle Eastern food in the Elmwood, inexpensive, good for families. Open for lunch and dinner. There is a street-side patio which is heated and can be very pleasant in the evenings or late mornings. The food is quite tasty, the service quick and friendly. The lamb and chicken dishes are nicely spiced. There are lots of vegetarian choices, too. This place gets very crowded on weekend nights, so there is often a wait.

**Rick and Ann's**

12

2922 Domingo St. opposite Claremont Hotel

649-8538

A very informal American place for terrific breakfasts, good lunches, and decent dinners. Outdoor tables for sunny days. Prices moderate. This is a good place for families with children, since the choices range from hamburgers to more sophisticated fare. The classic dishes on the main menu are preferable to the specials. The place is mobbed on weekend mornings.

**Trattoria La Siciliana**

13

2993 College Ave. south of Ashby

704-1474

Another Italian addition to "restaurant row" in Elmwood, this small two level storefront cafe is hugely popular, very noisy, and generally has a line out the door waiting for tables. What draws the crowds are large portions of hearty garlic infused pastas, along with salads, antipasti, and meat and fish dishes. The prices are moderate, and everyone is robustly friendly. Credit cards are not accepted. Open for dinner only.

**Mitama**

14

3201 College Ave. at Alcatraz

652-6157

At the Berkely-Oakland border, you will find this corner storefront Japanese restaurant. There's a small sushi bar, the tables are nicely spaced, and the modern atmosphere is quiet. Service is friendly and families are welcome. The sushi is very fresh, but the tempura tends to be a little greasy. Portions are somewhat small and the prices are high end. There's a good choice of sake. A nice place for lunch also. Worth a try if you are in the area.

**Flavors of India**

15

3211 College Ave. at Alcatraz

658-3461

A new small, nicely decorated, informal place offering quite delicious Indian food, including a number of excellent small plates, huge inexpensive tandoori wrap sandwiches, and more. It can get pretty crowded at peak dining times, and service can lag, but it's worth the wait. One of the better Indian places in this part of town.

16

**Downtown****TukTukThai**

17

2466 Shattuck Ave. at Haste

540-6360

In a high ceilinged simple storefront space, not far from downtown theaters and shopping is this really inexpensive informal Thai cafe. The large menu features food that is delicious, fresh and tasty. The tables are nicely spaced, service is prompt and friendly, and there are lots of vegetarian choices. Wonder of wonders, they are open daily until very late, which makes it one of the few places to get a meal after midnight. It's not haute cuisine, but at midnight on a Sunday, who cares!

**La Note**

18

2377 Shattuck Ave. south of Durant

843-1535

A charming Provençal cafe, open for breakfast, lunch and weekend brunch, with dinner on the weekend. The food reflects quality ingredients, with lovely French accents. Large portions of salads, sandwiches and main lunch entrees are moderately priced, although dinners are more expensive. A small wine list, fairly priced. Lovely background music, good service. A peaceful sunny patio out back is ideal for lunch or brunch when it's warm.

**Venus**

19

2327 Shattuck Ave. north of Durant

540-5950

This very informal brick walled cafe has healthy American breakfasts, lunches with a moderately priced small menu, offering soups, salads, and heartier fare. At dinner there is a small interesting menu with higher prices for both food and wine. The food is generally organic, the service personal and friendly. A good selection of vegetarian fare too. Located near downtown theaters.

**Beckett's Irish Pub**

20

2271 Shattuck Ave. near Bancroft

647-1790

This is a two story Irish pub and restaurant in the heart of downtown Berkeley. The decor is woodsy, with portraits of famous Irishmen looking down from the walls. The downstairs area is a noisy sports bar, but upstairs, when it is open, is quieter. Service is quick and friendly. The selection of beers is wonderful, the moderately priced food fairly decent. There is often Irish music. Open late.

**Angeline's Louisiana Kitchen**

21

2261 Shattuck Ave. north of Bancroft

548-6900

In a convenient downtown location, you will find this informal restaurant featuring the special cuisine of Louisiana. Red brick walls, photos of New Orleans, and jazz music enhance the food experience. The hush puppies are really good, as is the gumbo, jambalaya, Po-boys, and fried oysters. Prices are moderate. A great place for lunch or dinner. There's even Louisiana beer now. The ever present owner is really friendly too.

**Great China**

22

2115 Kittredge St. btw. Oxford and Shattuck

843-7996

A small Chinese restaurant with many choices, unusual special items and moderate prices. This is very popular with Asian students. Near the downtown theaters, usually very crowded and noisy, service can be slow and disorganized. But you will find dishes here that you cannot find elsewhere, so be patient and understanding, and you will be rewarded. This is also a good place for lunch, with low prices and generous servings.

**Mel's Diner**

23

2240 Shattuck Ave. at Kittredge

540-6351

A great location for an old fashioned favorite. Open for breakfast, lunch and dinner, and one of the very few places in downtown Berkeley open late. Go after a movie, select some 50's songs on the juke box, have a milk shake with your burger and fries, and wallow in nostalgia. The food is simple, generous, and mostly good value for the money. No beer or wine. This is not the place for an intimate date, but kids and teenagers love it.

**Cancún**

24

2134 Allston Way btw. Oxford and Shattuck

549-0964

A downtown favorite of many, this extremely informal Mexican cafe offers a wide variety of generously portioned inexpensive food. The fish burritos are especially good here. You order at the counter, and service is quick. A plus is the serve yourself salsa bar, with a large choice of sauces of varying spiciness. This place can get very crowded and noisy at lunch when the hordes of students descend, so go at an off hour or for dinner!

**Jupiter**

25

2181 Shattuck Ave.

843-8277

A multi-tap brew pub and restaurant, located close to campus and downtown theaters, this two level cafe is in a historic Berkeley building. There is a lovely patio out back, which is a great choice for lunch. The food can be quite variable, but it's not very expensive. Most people order one of the interesting pizzas. The beers change constantly, and usually feature lesser known local brews. Live music is offered at various times, with no cover charge. When crowded, this place is very noisy.

**Bistro Elephant**

26

21340 Oxford St. south of Center

849-1423

Very near campus, this small restaurant is connected to Khana Peena, but offers eclectic bistro cooking with elegant presentation along with prices that are a real bargain for what you get. Some of the dishes are really good. Because of its awkward location, it isn't getting the crowds it deserves. Since it's usually very quiet, it's a great choice for a nice lunch or dinner. The service is friendly, the wines are well priced, and it is definitely worth a try.

**Alborz**

27

2142 Center St. btw. Oxford and Shattuck

848-8877

Conveniently close to campus, this is the only Persian restaurant in Berkeley. It's open for lunch and dinner, offering tasty interestingly spiced entrees, and especially good appetizers. Prices are high at dinner, but much less expensive at lunch. The house wine is very good, too. Nicely decorated with tables well spaced, there are outdoor tables for good weather. Service can be disorganized.

**Raphael**

28

2132 Center St. btw. Oxford and Shattuck

644-9500

Close to campus, this restaurant features Vegetarian Italian food that is also Kosher. Everything is pretty good, although variable. The service is friendly and knowledgeable, although sometimes slow. The atmosphere is noisy and lively, and while the prices for the pastas are moderate, other entrees are quite pricey. There's a full bar and the house wine is really good, too. A popular happy hour is offered on weekdays.

**Downtown**

29

2102 Shattuck Ave. at Addison

649-3810

A large and very handsome restaurant, bringing a little bit of glamour to the Berkeley theater district. The food is Mediterranean inspired, the cooking is good but not great, and there's a raw bar for seafood lovers. The main menu prices are overpriced, as is the wine. The bar menu is more moderately priced. There's often music later in the evenings, and it's good for "hanging out". Open for lunch most weekdays, this is a nice if pricey addition to the downtown scene.

**La Rose Bistro****30**

2037 Shattuck Ave. near Addison

644-1913

In a small two level storefront, close to the University and downtown, you will find this charming place. The cooking is California Asian Fusion, and it is excellent, with nice moderate prices too. Open for lunch and dinner, the atmosphere is quiet, the tables nicely spaced, the service friendly. This is a place to think of for a fine lunch, as well as before going on to the theater or a downtown movie.

**Zatar****32**

1981 Shattuck Ave. north of University

841-1981

In an exotically decorated narrow storefront close to campus you will find this small quiet restaurant featuring large portions of assertively spiced Mediterranean cuisine. The main dishes offer enticing combinations, unusual and tasty. Entrees are expensive, wines even more so. Less expensive delicious sangria is an alternative drink choice. Lunch prices are lower, but still high end. Service informal, leisurely, and friendly. No credit cards.

**Liaison****34**

1849 Shattuck Ave. at Hearst

849-2155

Very popular, this French bistro is located close to campus and the downtown theaters. The decor is charming, the service professional and warm, food prices moderately high, wine prices high. This place offers wonderful bistro food, onion soup, oysters, mussels and frites, and more. It can get very noisy when crowded. Reservations recommended, even for lunch. Now open weekday mornings for coffee and pastries. Outdoor tables for nice weather.

**Chaat Cafe****36**

1902 University Ave. at Martin Luther King

845-1431

This informal storefront cafe is very popular, especially at lunch. It features a wide variety of tasty inexpensive Indian small plates, along with a selection of Indian sandwiches, breads, salads, and a daily choice of larger plates accompanied by rice and naan. Beer and wine are available also. You order at the counter and the food is brought to your table. The inexpensive lunch prices last until 5 p.m., so it's a great place for a cheap early dinner!

**38****West Side****Taiwan****31**

2071 University Ave. below Shattuck

845-1456

Chinese, with some unusual country dishes on the large menu. The cooking is not particularly refined, but is tasty and generous. This is a good place for a very inexpensive downtown lunch, and dinner is worth the money too! Open late every night -- one of the few places to go when everything else has closed. Also, weekend Chinese brunch is a specialty. This is a popular place for takeout food, with convenient parking out the back door, in the city lot.

**Triple Rock Brewery****33**

1920 Shattuck Ave. one block north of Univ.

843-2739

A busy hangout not far from campus. Beer and ale made on the premises. The Pub food is surprisingly good -- excellent sandwiches and great soups and chili at lunch, more substantial grub at dinner. Nothing too expensive, and very informal. Open every day. In warm weather the "rooftop garden" is popular. One of the first of the brewery cafes in the area, it is one of the most successful -- be prepared for crowds, noise, and sports on the TV.

**Platano****35**

2042 University Ave. east of Milvia

704-0325

Close to campus this informal storefront restaurant is the only place in Berkeley offering Salvadorian cuisine. The food is well prepared, tasty, and nothing is very expensive. Service is friendly and quick. It's fine for both lunch or dinner. Think of this place when you are in the mood for trying something different, unusual, and delicious.

**Venezia****37**

1799 University Ave. at Grant

849-4681

This lively Italian restaurant is a Berkeley favorite. The menu features pasta with a number of delicious and varied sauces, moderately priced. There is a daily selection of more expensively priced chicken, meat or fish dishes, but it's the pasta that you should eat here. This place can get pretty noisy at times. Dinner reservations are accepted, and children welcomed. It's open also for lunch and Sunday brunch. There is a private back room, good for groups.

**Pomegranate****39**

1585 University Ave. above Sacramento

665-5567

This restaurant has a large menu comprising a variety of appetizers and sandwiches, pastas, pizzas, and Mediterranean "specialties". Stick with the Mediterranean food, and you will have a tasty fairly inexpensive meal. Portions are generous, the wine reasonable, and it's generally not crowded. Service is informal. Open for both lunch and dinner, there's parking in the adjacent lot.

**Olivia**

40

1453 Dwight Way just below Sacramento 548-2322

Cozy and charming, this is a Country French Bistro in an out of the way location. The small menu offers some interesting choices, prices are moderate, and there's even some decently priced wine. Tables are nicely spaced, service solicitous. The quality of the food is variable, depending on the menu choice, but it definitely should be on your list of places to at least try.

**Genki**

41

1610 San Pablo Ave. at Cedar 524-1465

Located in an out of the way spot, next to a motel, this Japanese restaurant and sushi bar is worth the trip. Nondescript decor, extremely simple atmosphere, but the food is good, the portions large, the service friendly, and the prices moderate. The menu features a large selection of sushi. The sashimi and tempura are fine, too, and there is usually a big choice of daily specials. Often crowded and popular with Asian families. Easy parking in the motel lot.

**Sea Salt**

42

2512 San Pablo Ave. south of Dwight 883-1720

An all seafood restaurant brought to you by the folks from Lalime's, this large beautifully decorated place is a hit. The food reflects a New England heritage with a California twist with such traditional favorites as lobster rolls and clam chowder. Prices are high for the portion size, everything is very fresh, but the cooking can be uneven. Wine prices are high end. A special menu treat offers Oysters at \$1 each from 4 to 6 p.m. every day. Also, the lovely outdoor patio is now open.

**900 Grayson**

43

900 Grayson St. at 9th 704-9900

In an industrial part of town and open for breakfast and lunch only, this is a popular and "with it" place offering cool decor and moderately priced delicious California food with an Asian touch. The menu terms are somewhat whimsical, but don't let that deter you from the terrific food. It is hectic and crowded at peak times, so go early or late, or be prepared to wait.

**Bucci's**

44

6121 Hollis St. in Emeryville 547-4725

Emeryville has many wonderful cafes and restaurants. This is one of them -- great Italian pizza, pasta, small dishes, desserts and salads. Nightly specials are usually terrific. Prices are moderately high, and the atmosphere "with it" and sophisticated. Portions are generous. The decor is trendy, the service professional. When there's a crowd, this place gets very noisy, although the back room is somewhat quieter. Parking available in the adjacent lot.

**Emeryville Market**

45

5800 Shellmound in Emeryville

Across from the Amtrak station is this terrific, crowded complex of a multiplex movie theater, a huge food hall with a wide variety of interesting inexpensive ethnic cuisines, a large book and record store, and more. Go for lunch and join the crowds from the nearby software firms. The location is also not far from IKEA and Trader Joe's, so you can escape from shopping. A good place for families with children. Lots of parking.

**Bay Street Emeryville**

46

off Shellmound St. in Emeryville

An upscale complex, featuring a multiplex movie theater, a huge book store, and a large number of specialty shops. There's also a small complex of restaurants on a sunny upper balcony area, with a many food choices all at moderate prices. One of the best is the Zao Noodle Bar, but Rubio's Baja Grill is good for fish tacos. At street level there are some fine places too. Located near both IKEA and Trader Joe's. Large parking garage.

**Spenger's Fresh Fish Grotto**

47

1919 4th St. just north of University 845-7771

This Berkeley favorite has a huge menu and a daily "fresh list" of fish. A few menu items from the old Spenger's remain, but the emphasis now is definitely upscale, and reservations are necessary. The ancient waiters are gone, and service is decent. The chef is working towards more fresh and modern cooking and it's generally successful. However, prices are high end. It is usually crowded, and remains popular all over the East Bay. Large parking lot across the street.

**O Chame**

48

1830 4th St. 841-8783

A favorite of many in Berkeley, this restaurant resembles an exquisitely decorated Inn, with carefully prepared classic Japanese country cuisine, some unusual appetizers, and artistic presentation. The menu is small, featuring inexpensive large bowls of noodles with varying healthy ingredients, and a few more expensive special choices of grilled meat or fish. The quality of the latter is superb, but the portions can be modest.

**Eccolo**

49

1820 4th St. 644-0444

Part of the Fourth Street Shopping Experience, this California Eclectic restaurant features the cooking philosophy of Christopher Lee, a former chef at Chez Panisse, who is the chef-owner. The menu reflects high quality seasonal ingredients, cooked with elegance. Portions are decent, food prices are high, wine prices outrageous. The space is lovely, although the ambiance varies with the table location, and some are noisy. Service friendly and professional. Deserves a visit.

**Bette's Ocean View Diner**

50

1807A 4th St.

644-3230

Great '40s atmosphere complete with noisy juke box and plastic counters. Good fresh food, terrific American breakfasts and lunches. Not open for dinner. Located near a hugely popular array of interesting shops and discount stores to explore before or after a meal. Nearby is Betty's "To Go" where you can pick up all kinds of wonderful food when you are on the run.

**Café Rouge**

51

1782 4th St., but enter on the side street

525-1440

Also part of the Fourth Street Scene, this lively and noisy restaurant features an oyster bar and California eclectic cuisine, with excellent meat. There is a connecting high end butcher shop and Italian deli. The dinner menu prices and the wines are expensive. Lunch prices are more moderate, as is the popular hamburger at dinner. A recent addition is \$1 oysters on Wednesday nights. This is definitely an "in" place in Berkeley. Parking lot and entrance are on the side street.

**Tacubaya**

52

1788 4th St., but enter on the side street

525-5160

Hidden away in a corner, in the popular Fourth Street Complex is this upscale "order at the counter" Mexican cafe. It's an informal branch of Oakland's Dona Thomas, and features a wide choice of small plates. Open for breakfast, lunch, and now early dinner too, the food is truly delicious, carefully and artfully prepared. Beware, though, ordering a substantial meal can result in quite a high bill. The atmosphere is charming and lively, the service quick and pleasant.

**Seabreeze Market**

53

598 University Ave. west of the freeway

486-0802

Informal in the extreme, this deli market offers groceries along with great sandwiches, fried fish, clam chowder, and more. It's close to the freeway, with lots of parking, and it is popular not only with commuters, but hikers and bikers too. There are a number of picnic tables and chairs scattered around outside, and it's a fine place to have an oyster burger or some fried clam strips on a sunny day. Open all day.

**Skates on the Bay**

54

100 Seawall Drive at Berkeley Marina

549-1900

Lively bar, beautiful view. A huge restaurant with a varied menu -- something for everyone, but pricey. Although some people think the food is great, I am not among them, so go for drinks, snacks, and the sunset. This is popular for families and young dating couples. Wide variety of beers. Serves late at night when other places are closed, but check first before going.

## North Side

**North Side**

56

Euclid and Hearst

In a quiet, unhurried area at the north edge of campus can be found a number of cafes and small ethnic restaurants, all of them informal, unassuming, and inexpensive. Some are clustered around a sunny deck, nice for an informal lunch. You can find pizzas, burritos, crepes, falafel, hot dogs, Thai, Chinese, Japanese, and Korean cooking, as well as soup and sandwiches, and a decent espresso cafe.

**Café Gratitude**

57

1730 Shattuck Ave.

A place featuring uncooked vegan food, open for breakfast, lunch, and dinner, very popular with people who are really serious about healthy organic food. The uniformly cheery wait staff promote the philosophy of gratitude, generosity and world acceptance. The fancifully named menu listings go along with the philosophy. The food is unusual and not expensive, but will certainly not appeal to everyone. Reservations only for 6 or more.

**Thai Delight**

58

1700 Shattuck Ave. just south of Virginia

549-0611

Located in an unassuming storefront, this friendly Thai restaurant features organic vegetables and hormone-free meat in all of its dishes. The atmosphere is quiet, the tables well spaced, and the menu has all the standards plus a few unusual and delicious items also. If kabocha squash curry or tempura crabs are on the menu, order them! This is a good place for lunch as well as for takeout. Prices moderate.

**Taste of the Himalayas**

59

1700 Shattuck Ave. at Virginia

849-4983

You will be warmly received at this place featuring the food of India and Nepal. The decoration is lovely, the atmosphere calm and quiet, and the food well priced and tasty. Do not miss the unusual momos. Lots of good vegetarian choices, along with more familiar Indian food. Open for both lunch and dinner every day.

**Café de la Paz**

60

1600 Shattuck Ave. at Cedar

843-0662

This upstairs restaurant features the cooking of Latin America and has its own separate entrance near the complex of shops and cafes. Wonderful tapas, and a good selection of unusual dishes, with good vegetarian choices. Atmosphere is light and airy, sometimes noisy. Prices are moderate. Tables are close together. The service is friendly and you can take the children. Downstairs there is a private space available for large groups.

**Barney's Hamburgers**

61

1600 Shattuck Ave., on Cedar

849-2827

A branch of a popular chain (others are on Solano Ave., and on College Ave. just north of Rockridge BART). Good for huge hamburgers with all kinds of toppings, soups, large salads, milk shakes, wine and beer. The French fries are terrific, and a half-order is plenty! There's an outdoor patio for sunny days.

**Grégoire**

62

2109 Cedar St. above Shattuck

883-1893

A small storefront with a picnic table outside, with upscale take out lunch and dinner. It is enormously popular. Everything is fresh and tasty, and the menu offerings change with the seasons. The prices are quite high end for take out, although the quality is good. Call ahead and bring your choices home in an esthetically pleasing box, or sit outside and join the happy people munching away. There's also a branch on Piedmont Avenue in Oakland.

**Cha Am**

63

1543 Shattuck Ave. near Cedar

848-9664

Small charming restaurant featuring Thai food, nicely done. The spicing is often more complex and delicate here than in other Thai restaurants. The daily specials are usually superb. Very popular and often crowded, so be prepared for a wait. This is also a good place for take out. There is a separate room for large parties. Open both for lunch and dinner, this is still one of my favorites.

**Chez Panisse**

64

1517 Shattuck Ave. north of Cedar

548-5525

California-French, emphasizing fresh organic food, this can be superb or merely uniquely special, depending on the set menu for the night. Good wine list. Very very expensive. Reservations imperative, far in advance, although the menu is known only one week ahead. This has become world famous, and the prices reflect the fame. There is a somewhat lower-priced set dinner on Monday nights, which can be quite wonderful, although it is still rather expensive.

**Chez Panisse Upstairs Café**

65

1517 Shattuck Ave. north of Cedar

548-5049

Light, bright, lively, more casual dining than downstairs. Great for pizzas, soups, salads, and more sophisticated substantial fare. Everything is quite delicious. Open for lunch, dinner and later. Upscale prices, excellent professional service. Reservations are generally required. All Berkeley seems to convene here at one time or another.

**César**

66

1515 Shattuck Ave. next to Chez Panisse

883-0222

North Berkeley's place to see and be seen, this tapas bar is very popular. There's a limited menu, with Spanish influenced small plates, and upscale prices. If they're on the menu, do not pass up the fried potatoes! There's a huge list of cocktails, beer, sherries, and non alcoholic drinks, as well as pricey wines. The space is beautiful. It's a lively, noisy, and eclectic crowd, with friendly seating at the bar. Open daily for lunch and dinner late into the night.

**Bistro Lucille**

67

Berkeley near Tilden Park

unlisted

Really good food available at all hours of the day and night, emphasizing freshness, creativity, and the warmth of the chef. A recent addition is the delicious low carb, low fat diet menu. The cooking is California French but caters to all tastes. The wine list is limited but well priced. The portions are generous and diners are urged to take home leftovers. Everyone, including children, love this place. Unfortunately dining is only by personal invitation of the chef.

**Taste**

68

1513 Shattuck Ave. south of Vine

540-7800

Adjacent to a very upscale food hall is this combination wine tasting room, wine shop, and restaurant. A recent renovation has changed the menu and space, offering well priced small and medium sized plates, with hip decor and clientele to match. The food has really improved, the wines remain wonderful, and you can use the unique dispensing machine, or just purchase a glass or a bottle. The servers are friendly. Oper for lunch too, as well as takeout.

**Epicurious Garden**

69

1511 Shattuck Ave. south of Vine

North Berkeley's gourmet food hall, with an assortment of stalls offering a choice of delicious expensive food ranging from soup and sushi to gelato, chocolate, chick pea pancakes with wonderful toppings, and finally tea and noodles. New is Picoso, an inexpensive Mexican restaurant. There's even a cooking school hidden away upstairs. Not much seating is available, since this is mostly geared for takeout, but there is a lovely back terrace if you can snag a seat.



**Cheese Board Pizza**

70

1512 Shattuck Ave. south of Vine

549-3055

Follow the crowds lined up at lunchtime in front of this Berkeley institution. What they're after is a slice or two of crisp crusted pizza fresh from the oven topped creatively and always delicious. You can order a whole pie to go, but you'd miss the unique ambiance, the piano player, the people picnicking on the grassy strip in the middle of the street. Next door is a great cheese and bread store, where you can buy the pizzas half baked.

**Saul's Delicatessen**

71

1475 Shattuck Ave. north of Vine

848-3354

This is Berkeley's attempt at an East Coast Deli, and it is sort of successful. There is a huge take out counter featuring all kinds of upscale treats, as well as a large sit down area. The free half sour pickles are not very good, but the pastrami and corned beef are OK. Prices are moderate, service quick. This gets very crowded on weekend mornings and before evening readings at nearby Black Oak Books.

**Fat Apple's**

72

1346 Martin Luther King Way at Rose

526-2260

The place for breakfast or a hamburger and apple pie. Some people feel that they have the best brunches and burgers in town. Often a wait for a table, but the service is fast, and the waiting line moves quickly. Open until 9 p.m. on weeknights and Sundays, and until 10 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays. In an adjoining space is a bakery with pies and pastries for sale, where you can also order anything on the menu "to go".

# Solano Avenue

**Khana Peena**

74

1889 Solano Ave. near The Alameda

528-2519

In a nicely remodeled storefront is this popular Indian restaurant, featuring a varied and tasty menu. The tables are close together, but the service is quick and the cooking good, if not creative or sophisticated. Prices are very reasonable, and the lunchtime fixed price buffet is actually quite good. If you know what to expect, this should be an enjoyable experience.

**Ajanta**

75

1888 Solano Ave. near The Alameda

526-4373

This is a very fine Indian restaurant. The atmosphere is quiet, refined and elegant, and the spicing can be to your taste. Each month unusual dishes from different regions are featured, and they are usually delicious. The service is personal and warm. The location is the increasingly lively upper Solano Avenue, and it's fun to stroll and shop before or after a meal. Prices moderately high for this cuisine.

**Cactus Taqueria**

76

1881 Solano Ave.

528-1881

A lively Mexican restaurant on upper Solano, this is a branch of a College Ave. restaurant. The food is fresh and inventive, with a sensitivity to health. You order at the counter, choosing from an array of delicious fillings, beans, rice, and tortillas. There is a huge choice of beers, and also coffees and soft drinks. A hit, it can get crowded and noisy, but it is great for families, and for a quick, tasty meal that is not expensive.

**Zachary's Chicago Pizza**

77

1853 Solano Ave.

525-5950

Jam-packed and informal. The specialty is stuffed thick pizza but the regular pizza is the best in town according to some. Good for take out if you can get them to answer the phone -- if not, go in person and wait your turn. During the day you can buy a very inexpensive "single slice" which makes a terrific snack, or even lunch. Kids love this place. The branch on College Avenue is a neighborhood hangout -- the weekend crowds there are phenomenal!

**Vanessa's**

78

1715 Solano Ave. at Tulare

525-8300

A terrific Vietnamese restaurant named after the chef, who used to cook at Rose Bistro. She moved across town so she could cook the food she loves, and we are very lucky that she did. The place is small, but has a lovely long bar so you can have a quick informal bite if you wish. The food features beautifully seasoned small plates, generally well priced. The whole family pitches in to serve, and everyone is friendly. Recommended!

**King Tsin**

79

1699 Solano Ave. below Colusa

525-9890

A favorite of loyal clientele, this family run restaurant has been updated with a clean, bright, and modern atmosphere. There's an extensive menu of delicious moderately priced Chinese food. They are now offering Dim Sum too. It's very popular, and can get noisy when crowded, but the service is friendly and fast. If you have a special favorite that's not on the menu, ask for it and they will prepare it to order. Portions are generous. This is also a great place for takeout.

**Bui**

80

1647 Solano Ave. near Ventura

528-8878

Another Vietnamese restaurant, from the owners of Saigon City on Telegraph Ave. This place is upscale, white tablecloths, beautiful presentations, lovely decor, tables well spaced. The food is good, but not great, and the prices high for this type of cuisine. Service is swift but not especially warm and friendly. If you choose wisely however, you can have a fine meal here, and it's a good choice for lunch.

**Cugini**

81

1556 Solano Ave.

558-9000

This small family run (Cugini means cousin) Italian restaurant is worth a try. The menu features thin light crunchy pizzas with a variety of toppings, and an interesting choice of delicious pastas, calamari, salads, and desserts. The calzone is great! There is a daily risotto special, along with a variety of appetizers. Atmosphere is convivial and noisy, service friendly. It's now open for lunch too.

**Rivoli**

82

1539 Solano Ave.

526-2542

This is one of the best restaurants in town for California cuisine. The space is light and airy, the food is divine, innovative, and the prices high. The waitpersons are knowledgeable, the wines well chosen, and dining here is altogether a fine experience. Reservations imperative, since it is deservedly very popular. Although the tables are close together, it is still one of my personal favorites.

**Fonda**

83

1501-A Solano Ave. in Albany

559-9006

Quite popular, this lovely restaurant is part of the Lalime "family". It focuses on small plates of South of the Border cuisine, along with special cocktails, wine and beer. The atmosphere is warm, service professional and solicitous. The prices are rather high for the portion size, but the food is exquisitely prepared and very delicious. When crowded this can get very noisy. It's definitely worth a try. It's now open for lunch too.

**Walker's Pie Shop**

84

1491 Solano Ave. in Albany

525-4647

The place for old fashioned '50s home style American cooking. No fancy decor here, and no hip young clientele, everyone seems to be a long time regular customer. The service is friendly and quick. What brings in the patrons are the generous portions of decent plain cooking with a slice of terrific pie for dessert. The prime rib dinner is popular.

**6 Degrees**

85

1403 Solano Ave. at Carmel

528-1237

An eclectic menu, featuring a large variety of well priced small plates, a few entree choices, and a variety of cocktails as well as very well priced wines. The atmosphere is warm, calming, and quiet, tables well spaced, service solicitous. The food is tasty, presentations lovely, and the portions very generous. Also open for lunch. It's worth every penny! Recommended.

**Britt-Marie's Wine Bar**

86

1369 Solano Ave. in Albany

527-1314

An informal cafe, open late, featuring hearty European cuisine. The duck is an especially good deal. The prices on the regular menu items are moderate, but the specials are higher end. The wine selections are interesting, with many available by the glass. The portions are large so you can make a good light meal out of a choice of appetizers. No reservations or credit cards. Open for lunch on most days during the week.

**China Village**

87

1335 Solano Ave.

525-2285

This is a Chinese restaurant which offers both a large generic menu with the usual selections that one can find anywhere, and an exciting and spicy Szechwan menu with some chef's specialties that are unique. Portions are generous. Prices are not that high for the quality. Be adventurous and try something different here.

**Solano Grill and Bar**

88

1133 Solano Ave. in Albany

525-8686

This spacious restaurant features large portions of "fusion" cuisine with beautiful presentation. There is a full bar, too. The atmosphere reflects an elegant and sophisticated touch, with friendly and knowledgeable service. A la carte prices are at the high end, but a wonderful feature is a three-course prix fixe menu, along with a good selection of not too expensive wines -- a good deal. A good choice for lunch also.

**Sugata**

89

1105 Solano Ave. at San Pablo

526-3516

Small, wonderful Japanese food -- some of the best around, in my opinion. Terrific sushi bar, authentic atmosphere. This is one of my favorite Japanese restaurants. The portions are larger than at other places. You can reserve the tatami room, take off your shoes, bend your knees, and have a true Japanese experience with your meal. The prices are moderately high. This place can get crowded at peak times. No longer open on Sunday.

**Nizza La Bella**

90

825 San Pablo Ave. just north of Solano

526-2552

This is a terrific bistro, beautifully constructed and decorated, featuring French-Nicoise food. It is deservedly popular. The service is friendly and professional. The owner is often on the premises, and she has put much love and thought into having a wonderful authentic atmosphere. Prices moderately high but worth it for the quality of the food and wine. Do not pass up this place, it's a favorite of mine!

**Lalime's Cafe**

91

1329 Gilman St. in Albany

527-9838

A gem, one my favorite restaurants in Berkeley. The cooking is Mediterranean-French -- everything is terrific, prices not that high for the quality. Airy space, friendly service, I always have a wonderful time here. Each month, there is a changing choice of enticing appetizers, main courses, desserts, and good wines. There are frequent special theme dinners, too. Get on the mailing list for the great monthly narratives, as well as the featured menu choices.

**T-Rex BBQ**

92

1300 10th St., at Gilman

527-0099

An upscale barbecue restaurant from the Lalime family, this two-level architecturally gorgeous place is beautifully designed and esthetically pleasing. Open throughout the day until late at night (yeah!) it is a most welcome addition to the neighborhood. The food is rather expensive, but generously portioned and tasty. The waitpersons are friendly and personable. Sunday Brunch is popular here.

**Pyramid Brewery**

93

901 Gilman St. below San Pablo

528-9880

This huge place features a variety of wonderful beers and ales, and a large and varied menu of mostly decent, well priced food. Industrial chic decor, with a two level warehouse sized dining area, a lively bar, and a small outdoor patio, this is the place for families, large boisterous groups of students or sports enthusiasts, and just folks looking for a lively time. Noisy, but fun if you know what to expect. Easy parking.

**Jimmy Bean's**

94

1290 6th St. at Gilman

528-3435

A very informal cafe brought to us by the owners of Lalime's. Open for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. For all meals you order at the counter. The menu has flavorful soups, salads, sandwiches, and quesadillas, as well as omelets, fruits and drinks. Prices are moderate, but dinner specials are more expensive, as is the wine. Located near a number of discount outlet stores, and usually not too crowded. A few outdoor tables, too.

**Picante Taqueria**

95

1328 6th St. south of Gilman

525-3121

Out of the way, but still very popular, with a wide choice of burritos, tacos, quesadillas, tostadas, and other platos. There's beer as well as wine margaritas. The cooking is fairly westernized, and the spicing pretty mild. Prices are moderate, and there is a fun informal atmosphere. Order at the counter, sit and enjoy. There's a lovely patio for sunny lunches. Also good for take out. Dress down for this place!

**Kensington Bistro**

96

Colusa Circle in Kensington

525-1350

This place is now two restaurants in one. During the day it offers delicious moderately priced California home style cuisine for lunch and brunch, but at night a new chef takes over and the place is transformed into a French Bistro called Post Meridian, offering Cuisine Bourgeoise at moderately high prices. We have not yet tried the dinner menu, so go on your own and let us know!

**Kensington Circus**

97

Colusa Circle in Kensington

524-8814

A British restaurant with a very informal atmosphere, a varied menu, good salads, hamburgers, shepherd's pie, and fish and chips. There's a nice pub type bar on the premises too, with a dart board. This is especially child friendly, complete with toys. Prices are moderate. A very likable, comfortable place, in an out of the way spot.

**Pacific East Mall**

98

3288 Pierce St. on the Bay side of Albany Hill

527-3000

Forget the airline ticket and get yourself to this huge Asian Mall to experience culture shock cheaply. At the center is an immense supermarket with completely unfamiliar items, a busy take out counter as well as a fish market where you can choose a whole fish and have it fried to order! There are restaurants with food from all over Asia. In the same parking lot is Daimo, a wonderful Chinese place with a huge traditional menu. Don't miss this experience!

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